

the WAY of WISDOM

a series in Proverbs 9-31

A. THE GOODNESS OF MARRIAGE

1. The Wonder of Intimacy

Three things are too wonderful for me; four I do not understand: the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a virgin. (Prov. 30:18–19)

2. A Godly Wife Is a Gift From God

He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD. (Prov. 18:22)

House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD. (Prov. 19:14)

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones. (Prov. 12:4)

B. HOW TO MARRY WELL

1. What to Avoid

Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman without discretion. (Prov. 11:22).

It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife. (Prov. 21:9, 25:24)

It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and fretful woman. (Prov. 21:19)

A foolish son is ruin to his father, and a wife's quarreling is a continual dripping of rain. (Prov. 19:13)

A continual dripping on a rainy day and a quarrelsome wife are alike; to restrain her is to restrain the wind or to grasp oil in one's right hand. (Prov. 27:15–16)

Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who strays from his home. (Prov. 27:8, see also 1:1-31:31)

2. What to Seek

- ¹⁰ An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. ¹¹ The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. ¹² She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.
- ¹³ She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. ¹⁴ She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar. ¹⁵ She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. ¹⁶ She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. ¹⁷ She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong. ¹⁸ She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. ¹⁹ She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle.
- ²⁰ She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy. ²¹ She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. ²² She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. ²³ Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land. ²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the merchant.
- ²⁵ Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. ²⁶ She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. ²⁷ She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.
- ²⁸ Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ²⁹ “Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.” ³⁰ Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. ³¹ Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates. (Prov. 31:10–31; see also 11:16)

C. MARRIAGE IN THE NEW COVENANT

- 1. Marriage Is a Shadow of the Reality, Which Is Christ:** “‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” (Eph. 5:31–32)
- 2. Marriage Is Not for Everybody:** “I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.” (1 Cor. 7:7)
- 3. Marriage Is to Be Honoured:** “Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.” (Heb. 13:4)